



INL employees give back to their communities in a number of ways, including buying Christmas gifts for some 275 children through the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.

## INL gives back to the eastern Idaho community

By Lori Priest and Lori McNamara, *INL Communications & Governmental Affairs*

Idaho National Laboratory (INL) employees have a long history of charitable giving, and this year is no exception. From United Way donations to volunteer activities, employees' contributions in 2011 are benefiting their neighbors in the local community and throughout the state.

During the holiday season, INL contractor Battelle Energy Alliance (BEA) supports the annual sitewide Christmas for Families program. This year, employees "adopted" 86 families to provide gifts for 273 children from Arco, Mackay, Howe, Roberts, Pocatello, Rigby, Ririe, Menan, Idaho Falls, Blackfoot and Shelley, and BEA donated \$4,000 toward food boxes for each family. Employees throughout INL also bought gifts for 275 children in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.

And each year, the Team INL employee volunteer program provides support for the Salvation Army's Christmas Bell Ringing program, which raises money to help provide food and shelter to the less fortunate in our community. This year, INL volunteers filled 28 two-hour shifts, which saved the Salvation Army more than \$500 that it would have had to pay to employees to ring the bells.

The United Way recently announced that INL employees contributed more than \$333,000 to this year's fund drive. BEA contributed \$55,000 in corporate funds, making the total INL contribution \$388,387. Since BEA took over operation of INL in 2005, employee contributions to the United Way have exceeded \$2.1 million and BEA has contributed an additional \$365,000 in corporate donations.



**INL employee Sheri Andreason presents gifts INL employees purchased for children in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.**

### Team INL

BEA also supports the community through its Team INL employee volunteer program, which provides a little bit of funding to help employees make a difference in their communities. The funding is often used to purchase building materials, paint, essential items and clothing.



**Several Team INL volunteers helped serve beverages throughout the Ammon Days festivities.**

Since 2005, BEA employees and volunteer groups have completed more than 200 Team INL projects, such as providing Christmas gifts each year for the teenagers living at The Haven transitional housing shelter and to developmentally disadvantaged individuals living in local group homes.

This year's Team INL projects included: a school supply donation drive yielding \$6,500 in supplies and monetary donations; providing new climbing gear for children attending Camp Magical Moments; providing chaperones for a shopping spree organized by the Salvation Army for 25 less fortunate children; and conducting a food drive for the Idaho Foodbank Eastern Regional that collected \$2,000 to help feed the hungry. Another project, "Cover Idaho," provided over 300 blankets to nonprofit agencies throughout the state.

INL managers participating in the lab's License to Lead program took part in three community service projects that involved: providing general cleanup, painting and repair at two CLUB Inc. houses; landscaping, building all-purpose rooms, paneling, painting and general cleanup at the Blackfoot Community Center; and providing cleanup, painting, carpentry work, building a security fence and upgrading door hardware at The Haven Shelter.

### Education Programs

INL's education program office invested \$473,000 in K-20 education initiatives to help over 20,000 students [throughout Idaho for Fiscal Year 2011](#). In addition, \$20,000 in scholarships was given to Eastern Idaho Technical College (EITC) and Idaho State University's Energy Systems

Technology and Education Center. And INL employees participated in EITC's Great Race for Education, as both players and support volunteers. This year, the event raised \$30,000 for the foundation's scholarship fund.

INL also sponsored several community-based science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education opportunities around the state like "Matter Matters," an interactive Discovery Center of Idaho road show about materials science, EITC summer camps, robotics programs, the Boise State University Engineering Expo and several other events.

BEA also provides corporate funding for teacher professional development, high school and teacher summer internships, and the INL Scholastic Tournament. Approximately 875 students from 72 Idaho schools participated in this year's INL Scholastic Tournament, a quiz-bowl type competition that tests students' math and science knowledge. Each year, INL organizes the Hispanic Youth Symposium, which encourages Latino teens to pursue education and brings regional universities together to offer scholarships to participants. In 2011 alone, these universities awarded \$2.7 million in scholarships to nearly 150 Idaho students.

### Technical Assistance Program

Each year, the INL technical assistance program provides technical expertise to state and local government, and regional small businesses. The requesting organization can receive, at no cost to it, up to 40 hours of laboratory employee time to address technical needs that cannot readily be met by commercially available resources in the region.

INL also donates technical expertise to community organizations. Since 2005, the lab has provided 6,900 hours worth of technical assistance to communities supporting a total of 175 projects. Throughout 2011, INL provided support for 35 technical assistance projects totaling more than 1,400 hours of assistance.

Among this year's technical assistance projects were an INL research team providing testing and validation assistance in conducting early ULI tests to demonstrate the validity of a new electrical connector design. Another project assisted a small company in the evaluation of a contact extensometer. The study conducted by INL scientists helped with the evaluation of current state-of-the-art technology in noncontacting extensometers.

Another project provided analysis of techniques to calculate the reduction of vomitoxins using INL laboratory mass spectrometry equipment. Vomitoxins are naturally occurring and unavoidable metabolites produced on a variety of cereal grains, which can have a toxic effect on animals and humans.

### Philanthropic Programs

Since the BEA contract began in February 2005, BEA has provided over \$6 million in corporate funding to numerous educational, philanthropic and technology-based economic development programs.



**INL employee Lori Priest holds a check representing the \$352,579.89 INL employees contributed to the United Way of Idaho Falls and Bonneville County.**

continue to do its part to support education programs, find avenues to help the less fortunate and support the economic development of the state. "We want to be a good corporate citizen and make a positive difference wherever we can," Priest said.



**INL employee Mary Alice Thom helped paint a room at a local Habitat for Humanity house for a recent Team INL volunteer project.**

BEA provides funding to Help Inc., The Soup Kitchen, Idaho Falls Community Food Bank, The Haven, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center and numerous nonprofit agencies that feed, clothe or provide shelter and services to the less fortunate in surrounding communities. INL funds philanthropic projects that focus on community, health and human services, and culture. In total, more than \$1.2 million in corporate funding has been given throughout the past five years to support over 100 agencies and programs.

"For the third year in a row, people in our community are struggling to make ends meet," said Lori Priest, INL's community relations coordinator. "Unfortunately, the needs are growing and decisions between buying food or paying the electricity bill are becoming a common reality for the working poor. It is a very difficult time for so many."

Priest said she is proud to work for a company that cares about helping others. "It is also heartwarming to see how many of our employees volunteer to help in so many ways. INL will

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